

**CHILD CARE LICENSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

8 March 2012
Cannon Health Building, Room 128
288 North 1460 West
Salt Lake City, UT

Members Present: Tracey Brown, Joni Hemond, Julie Shakk, Carol Thompson, Diane Wilkinson

Members Excused: Ed Dieringer, Leslie Hjorth, Michael Libeck, Heidi Radeke, Dale Smith

Department of Health and Child Care Licensing Staff Present: Sara Atherton, Simon Bolivar, Sue Kirkham, Joe Petersen, Colleen Murphy, Karrie Phillips, Jessica Strout, Donna Thomas, Teresa Whiting, Lynda Worthington

WELCOME

Ms. Wilkinson began the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

OLD BUSINESS

- The minutes from the last meeting, which was held on January 12, 2012, were approved by the committee and are posted on the Child Care Licensing website at www.health.utah.gov/licensing.
- Steve Matherly presented updates on Care About Child Care (QRIS):

The website is up and live at careaboutchildcare.utah.gov. All regulated providers have profile pages with their general information and a link to their Licensing History. Providers can add additional information and photos to their pages.

The Quality Indicators portion of the website is still being programmed. It should be complete in 4 to 6 weeks. There will be an explanation of the Quality Indicators which will include what they mean and how to apply for them. Only licensed centers and licensed family providers are eligible for Quality Indicators. Providers must go above and beyond being in compliance with Licensing rules to achieve Quality Indicators. All criteria information can be downloaded; there is no need for a visit from staff from the Office of Child Care or Licensing. Participation is voluntary and the Quality Indicator tab will only appear on the pages of those providers who apply for and achieve the Indicators.

Grants are available for those providers who choose to apply for Quality Indicators and can be used to purchase equipment and supplies to meet the criteria for the Indicators.

There is a place on the website for parent feedback and they are developing a place for provider feedback. This is a pilot program and they are open to any and all suggestions.

The program does not assign levels to providers and it is not tied to subsidy payments.

To date:

- 90 providers have uploaded pictures and statements to their pages. This is 16% of the eligible providers.
- 78 providers have applied for and had verified 1496 quality criteria. This is 7% of the eligible providers.
- There have been 4,779 hits to the website and 47,767 pages viewed. Last week there was an average of 326 hits per day.
- The average number of pages viewed is 10 and the average time on the site is 10 minutes.
- Last week there were 284 Web referrals. There were 42 web referrals the same week last year.

Ms. Wilkinson commented that she applied for and received the grant for Quality Indicators. She said it is an easy process and she received her merchandise quickly. She believes that most providers are already meeting most of the criteria for most of the Quality Indicators.

NEW BUSINESS

- Mr. Bolivar presented the new Child Care Licensing website:

It should be up and running soon.

It has links to each of the programs in the Bureau of Child Development and links to Care About Child Care, Immunization Protection in Child Care (IpiCC), and the Child Care Resource and Referrals.

There is information for parents and the public, which includes how to find a provider, how to review a facility's record, and how to file a complaint.

There is information on how to apply for a license, certificate, or exemption and the steps have links to the applicable documents.

There is a link to the Child Care Licensing Rules.

There is information for provider training.

There is information about the Advisory Committee which includes meetings and minutes.

There is contact information for Child Care Licensing staff.

- Mr. Bolivar presented the public comments received on the proposed rule changes. The following comments were received:

100-11: There was a request to have some examples explaining the tables for mixed age group ratios. Mr. Bolivar suggested that rather than have these examples in the rule, they be added to the Interpretation Manual. The Committee agreed with this suggestion.

R430-60-7: There was a request to add provisions for using 16- or 17-year-old assistant caregivers. Mr. Bolivar said this was an oversight and this will be added. The Committee agreed with this addition.

All Facility Rules: It was suggested to remove additional plumbing requirements that are over and above what local building codes require. Mr. Bolivar researched local building codes and could find no Licensing rule that was stricter than local building code. The Committee recommended not changing the proposed rules.

R430-100-4(11): There was a recommendation to reduce the square footage requirements by 25 percent. Mr. Bolivar stated the Caring for Children recommends more square footage per child than Licensing rules and they recommend that only open space be used when measuring and calculating square footage. Licensing staff include furniture used by children when measuring and calculating square footage. He also said that studies have shown that children need room to move for proper development. He taped off a 35 square foot area of the flooring so committee members could see what a 35 square foot looks like. He said a 25% reduction in this would be about 26 square feet, which is the approximate size of a playpen. Ms. Shakh asked if anyone knows why these recommendations were made. Ms. Whiting replied that recommendations for the reduction of square footage and child to staff ratios are economic issues. She added that a 2005 legislative audit concluded that Utah's rules for square footage and ratios are comparable to surrounding states and are reasonable rules. The Committee recommended not changing the proposed rules.

R430-100-11(4): There was a recommendation to increase child to staff ratios by 25% and to eliminate group sizes. Mr. Bolivar stated that Utah is already below the national average when it comes to child to staff ratios and group sizes. He also said there are studies showing that high child to staff ratios increases the stress levels in both the children and the staff. The committee recommended not changing the proposed rules.

R430-6-3(3): There was a recommendation to change the time period for submitting background screening documents from 5 to 10 days. Mr. Bolivar explained that would mean individuals would be with children for a longer period of time before their background

screenings were done. The Committee recommended not changing the proposed rules.

- The following were some public comments about some of Licensing's procedures:

There was a comment that the Department stop mailing background screening documents back to providers for minor mistakes or missing checks. Mr Bolivar explained that this has already been implemented. Background screening documents are mailed back only when they are missing signatures or the answers to the questions on the form.

There was a comment that center staff should not have to fill out the Child Records form and the Staff Records form prior to the inspection. Ms. Whiting explained that this change happened due to budget cuts and the decision was made to shorten the inspection time rather than eliminate a Licensor position. Mr. Bolivar said that, in addition to shortening the time of inspections, this procedure has reduced the number of findings for incomplete records. The year before this procedure was implemented, there were 144 findings issued for incomplete records. The year after this procedure was implemented, there was an 85% reduction in the number of findings issued for incomplete records and the second year after this procedure was implemented there was a 93% reduction in these findings. Ms. Wilkson asked Ms. Thompson her feelings about completing the forms. She said it does take time but it's only once a year. She said she would rather have complete records before her inspection than have findings from her inspection. The Committee recommended keeping this procedure.

There was a comment about Licensors asking questions in every classroom and requiring a visual inspection of a diaper change in every classroom with diapered children and that is takes more time than necessary. Ms. Atherton, Lead Center Licensor, explained that questions are asked of one staff person in each room with infants and toddlers and questions are asked of one staff person in one room of each age group of older children. For example, if a center has three rooms with two-year-old children, questions are asked of one staff person in one of those rooms. She further explained that one diaper change is observed for each age group of children with diapers, with a maximum of three diaper changes. The Committee recommended keeping the current procedures.

There was a comment that questions regarding simple practices be eliminated when instructions are clearly printed on the tool(s) being used. Mr. Bolivar explained that this is not being done.

There was a public comment to require that all early care and education providers be licensed. Mr. Bolivar and Ms. Whiting explained that Licensing staff does not have the authority to make this change because the exemptions are in statute. The Committee recognized that Child Care Licensing does not have this authority but would like to see such a change in statute.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Mr. Bolivar announced the closing of the North office. He announced that, due to budget cuts, the decision was made not to renew the lease for the North office. Starting in July, there will be only two offices. The Salt Lake office will be at 3760 Highland Drive in Salt Lake City and the Provo office will be at 150 East Center Street in Provo. Staff presently housed in the North office will be moved to the Salt Lake office.
- Ms. Wilkinson expressed concern about the rule that providers ensuring that outside walkways are free of ice and snow. She was worried about providers shoveling snow and not supervising children. Ms. Strout, Program Manager, and Mr. Bolivar explained that Licensing staff does not expect providers to be shoveling snow during storms. They allow a reasonable amount of time after storms to remove the snow and findings will only be issued if there is a build up of snow or ice.
- Mr. Bolivar reminded everyone that, in April, the FBI will no longer accept fingerprint cards. Staff will scan the cards and send the scanned cards to the FBI. There will be an increase in the cost for FBI (fingerprint) background screening checks. He will be sending out a post card with those details.
- Ms. Brown informed everyone about the Great Shake-Out on April 17th at 10:15 a.m. This is campaign for disaster preparedness. Child care providers need to be prepared for the possibility of families not being able to pick up their children for several days and have the necessary supplies on hand. More information can be found at www.shakeout.org/utah.

The meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

The next meeting will be on May 10, 2012 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in room 125 of the Cannon Health Building, located at 288 North 1460 West, Salt Lake City.